No 643 January 6, 2002

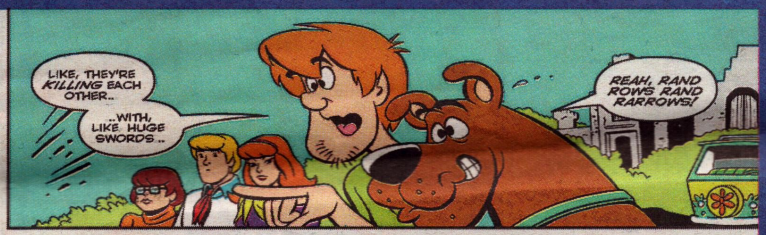
THE FUNDAY TIMES

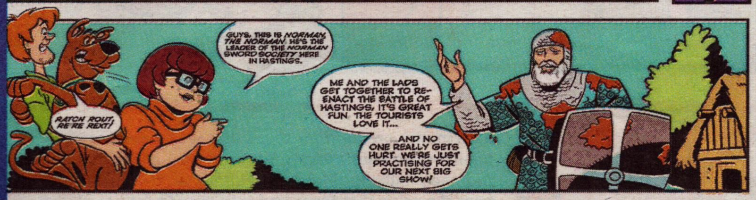
Welcome to a fun-tastic 2002!

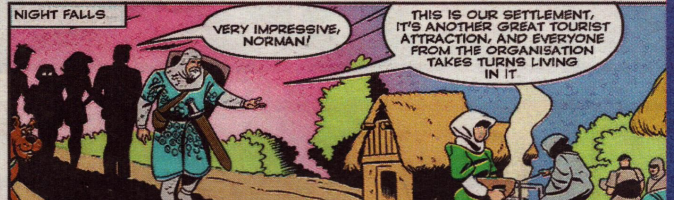
Get set for a great new year with Funday. Starting today, we have our exclusive new toon featuring that troublesome cat and mouse duo, Tom & Jerry!

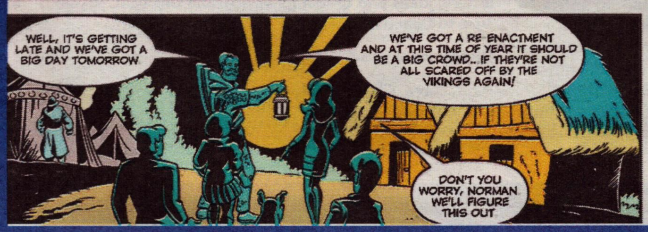
Page 4

SCOOBY-DOO! in YIKES! IT'S THE VIKINGS!









More inside

SCOOBY-DOO AND ALL RELATED CHARACTERS AND ELEMENTS ARE TRADEMARKS OF AND © HANNA-BARBERA (S02)

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

PICTURE: JAMIE HUGHES

At Funday, we're starting the new year with a bang! We've got some exciting plans for the year ahead, and we can't wait to get working on them. What's your new year's resolution? Ours is to cram even more fun into every issue of Funday. It'll be a tough task because we reckon it's bursting already, but we're going to try!

One fab addition is our brand-new cartoon on page 4 – the hilarious Tom & Jerry. It's the first time the terrible twosome have appeared in Funday, we hope you enjoy their madcap antics.

It's also going to be a big year for Scooby-Doo in 2002 – the summer sees the release of the first Scooby movie – and Funday is proud to be the official home of the crimefighting canine for the next 12 months. You can catch all-new Scooby stories starting each month on our front cover, plus we'll have lots of behind-the-scenes exclusives from the set of the film. Like their millions of fans, the Funday team were sad to hear the news that Steps had split over Christmas. We've shared some memorable moments with the band over the years, and Buzz! takes a look back at some of those highlights on page 9.

Sports fans are marvelling at the event-packed year ahead, and we've got a complete guide to the sporting highlights that you can look forward to. From the World Cup in Japan and Korea to the Commonwealth Games in Manchester, Funday will be covering them all – so sit back and enjoy the action!

Alongside the very best news, showbiz gossip and toons in town, we'll continue to feature as many readers' letters, jokes and drawings as possible this year. So, be sure to take part in Funday in 2002.

Happy new year!

Paul, Dave, Claire & Ed,
The Funday team

Look out for more Scooby capers next week!

FUNDAY

NEWS

The fun to come

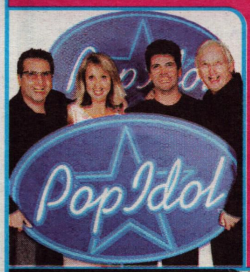
You may need to use euros when you travel within Europe now, but some things never change – there will be as much cool stuff to look forward to in 2002 as there was last year. Here we go ...

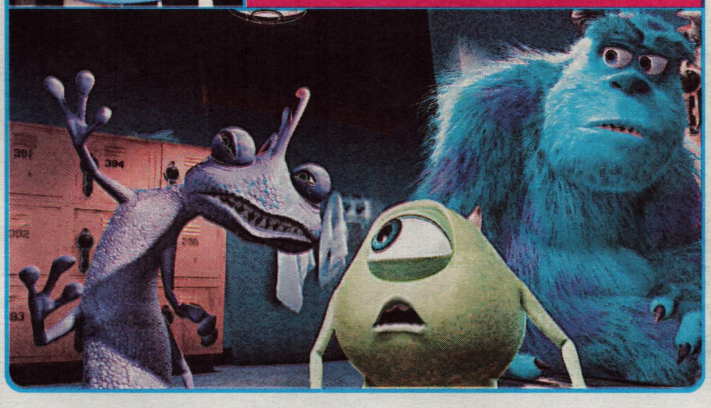
Steps may have bid farewell to us all, but there are plenty of your fave pop stars on tour in 2002. S Club 7 invite you to their Carnival tour in February, while Atomic Kitten go live in February and March; Kylie and Westlife in April and May; and Ronan and Destiny's Child in June. Finally, the pop sensations of 2001, Blue, are set to tour in November and December.

A battle of the games consoles is brewing as the 64Mb Xbox launches on March 17 followed later in the spring by the 40Mb Nintendo Gamecube. Both consoles promise bigger and better graphics and gaming.

On the box, the new Star Trek series, Enterprise, begins on Sky One this month, while February will see Pop Idol reach its long-awaited climax on ITV1 and the debut of 1960s-style action animation Teamo Supremo, on Disney Channel. Plus, the hunt is on to find the next 10 contestants for this summer's Big Brother 3!

At the movies, it promises to be another blockbusting year, with the second Harry Potter and Lord of the Rings films on the way. Harry Potter And The Chamber Of Secrets opens on November 15 while Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers is set for release on December 27. However, you won't have to wait long for the new Disney/Pixar smash, Monsters Inc – it's out on February 8. We've got a monster hunch that it's going to be huge – with Sully and Mike set to be the new Woody and Buzz! Other top films to look out for are Spider-Man on May 10; the live-action Scooby-Doo on July 26; and Men in Black 2 on August 2. Finally, muggles beware! While there is no firm publication date, the fifth Harry Potter book is due to arrive this July – if J K Rowling can find enough time to finish writing it!





PICTURES: AP/MICROSOFT, PA/BARRY BATCHELOR. ©DISNEY ENTERPRISES, INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

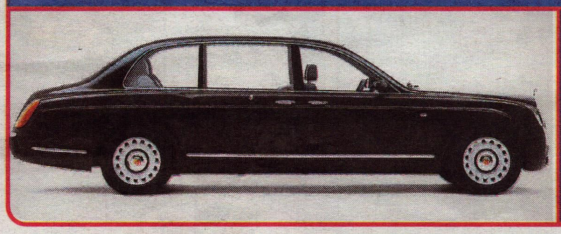
Cat-chup

While most felines are content lapping up a saucer of milk, China the cat loves nothing more than feasting on a dollop of tomato ketchup! Gemma Downing, owner of the sauce-obsessed moggie, discovered her Persian's preference for the red stuff while she was tucking into a bacon butty. She thought China was after a rasher – but it was the ketchup she craved. "I found China on her hind legs frantically licking up the remains of the sauce around the bottle neck. Now she can't get enough of it," said 18-year-old Gemma, from Wollaston, West Midlands. China now has a saucer of sauce every night before she curls up! "When I get the bottle out from the cupboard she starts purring and rubbing my leg!" added Gemma.

By royal appointment

One of the biggest celebrations planned for 2002 is the Queen's golden jubilee. After 50 years on the throne, the whole nation is set to mark Elizabeth II's reign with a series of special events, memorabilia and street parties. The main celebrations will take place from June 1 and will culminate in a special service in St Paul's Cathedral on June 4.

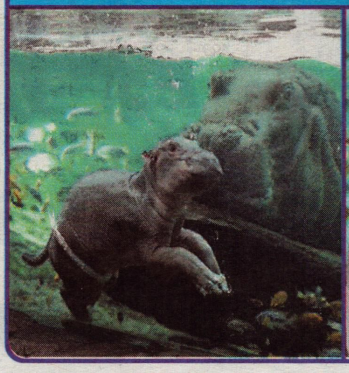
Everyone will get an extra bank holiday – on Monday, June 3 – and the late May Bank Holiday has been moved to Tuesday, June 4! This month, the Royal Mint will release a commemorative £5 coin, which will be minted in 22-carat gold and sterling silver and will be slightly larger than a 2p. Also, a specially-built Bentley State Limousine will be presented to the Queen later in the year for use during state occasions. For more info on the events and celebrations, click on www.goldenjubilee.gov.uk



THE QUEEN'S GOLDEN JUBILEE 2002

Hippo new year

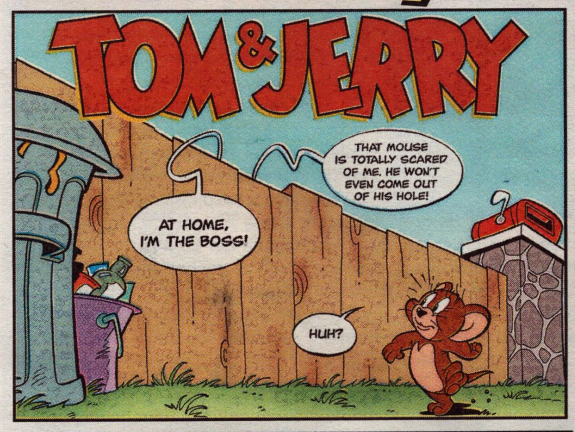
One recent arrival enjoying the new year is this new-born hippo calf at Busch Gardens, in Tampa Bay, Florida. This is the first hippo to be born at the park, and mum Cleo gave birth to the calf – who has yet to be named – underwater! Luckily, hippos can swim as soon as they are born and they usually weigh between 27 and 45kg. That's one big bouncing baby!

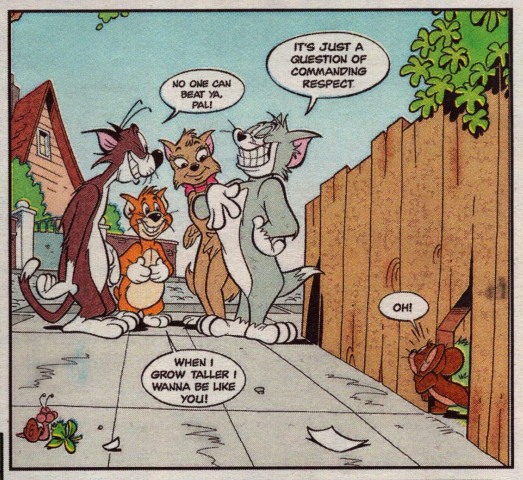


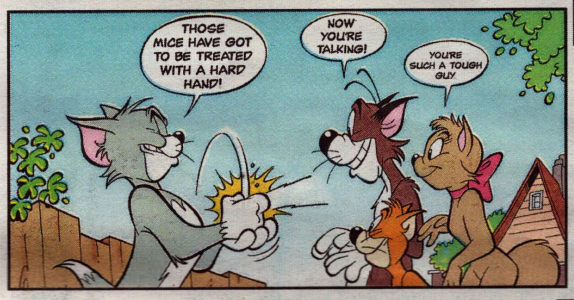
SMILE, PLEASE

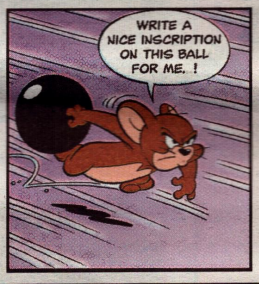
TOM & JERRY

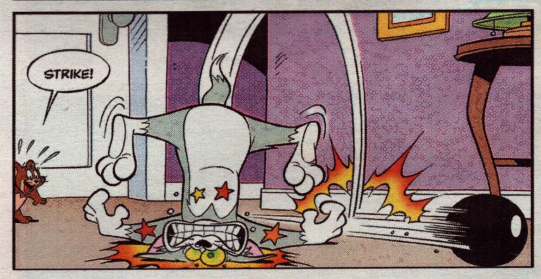
TOM & JERRY

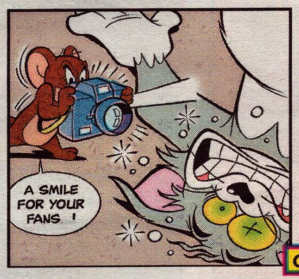












Continues next week!

TOM AND JERRY AND ALL RELATED CHARACTERS AND ELEMENTS ARE TRADEMARKS OF AND © TURNER ENTERTAINMENT CO. (S02)

DAGSY DOG

Woof, woof! Got any pet problems? Then get in touch with me at the address below!

My cat is always meowing when I play the violin and my mum plays the recorder. Why is this?
Olivia Smith, 6, Edinburgh

The behaviour your cat is showing is one of attachment to you and your mum. Kittens use their meow as a form of communication with their own mother. This, if encouraged, may persist into adult life and may be used as a form of communication with the owner. The crying during music is an attempt to make social contact with you and can help the cat bond with you. However, you must beware that your cat does not become over attached – crying for attention and following you around – as this may lead to problems when it's left alone. To prevent this, encourage independent behaviour while your cat is young.

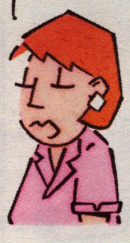
Advice by Blue Cross vet Mark Bossley

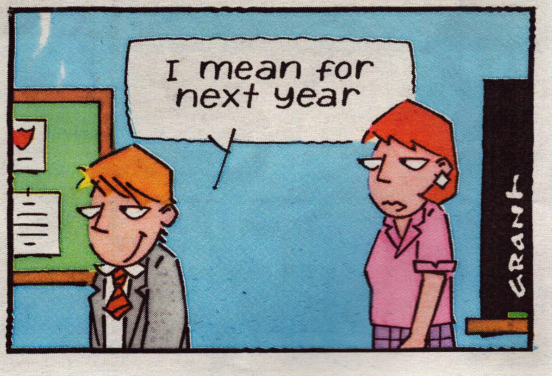
If you have a question for me or you want to send in a cool fact, write to:
The Funday Times, Dagsy Dog, PO Box 495, London E98 1ST
You can now e-mail your pet problems to
dagsy.dog@sunday-times.co.uk

The Blue Cross, one of Britain's oldest animal welfare charities, has four animal hospitals, 11 adoption centres, and two equine centres. Last year, the charity found new homes for 8,000 animals and treated more than 60,000 pets at its hospitals.

ILLUSTRATIONS: PAUL CEMMICK

Jarvis



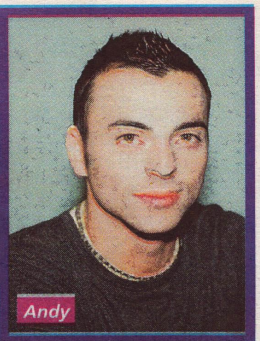


©KNIGHT FEATURES

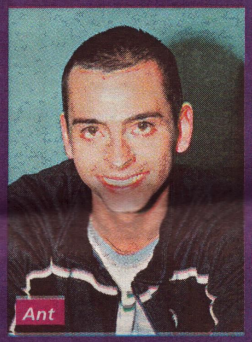
Tom & Jerry have arrived!

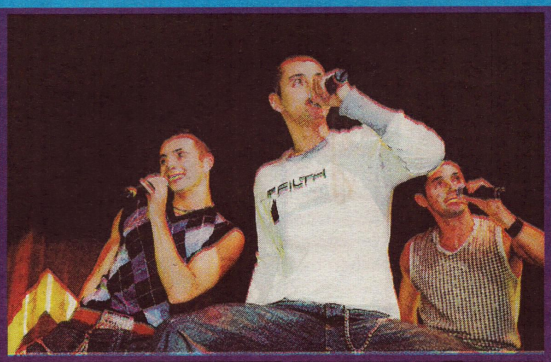
NEXT OF KIN

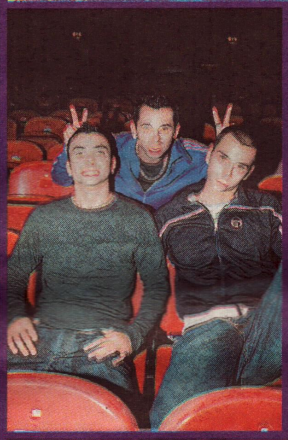
Although their debut single isn't out until April, 3SL are already causing a buzz in the pop world. Funday met the lads at Wembley Arena during the recent Steps tour to find out why

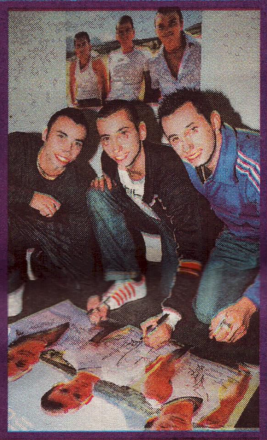

Andy

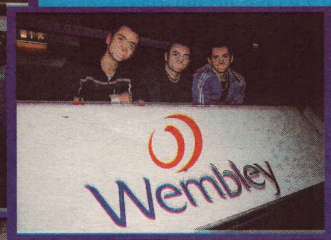
Steve


Ant









If you saw 3SL on the recent Steps tour, you'll know that their big sister is none other than Steps star Lisa Scott-Lee. And if you heard them performing, you're probably tempted to rush out and buy their catchy debut single, Take It Easy, but you'll have to wait – it's not out until April. But why the wait? Because 3SL want everyone in Britain to hear it first so that it'll go straight into the charts at number one.

To make their dream a reality, the busiest boys in pop have done the Steps tour, the Smash Hits roadshow and are about the hit the road once again, with S Club 7.

To find out more about Steve, Andy and Ant, we tracked them down at Wembley Arena where they were fine-tuning their funky dance moves before their next performance. Our first question: What does 3SL stand for?

"Officially it means Three Scott-Lees because there are three of us and our last name is Scott-Lee," says 18-year-old Ant – the baby of the bunch.

"But if we're talking to girls we say it means Three Single Lads. That way they know we're available," laughs 22-year-old Steve – the oldest member of the band, who calls himself the boss. "Of course if we get girlfriends we'll have to change it to 3AL –Three Attached Lads," chirps Andy, who's 20.

The boys are good mates as well as brothers. They decided to form a band two years ago and haven't stopped working since. Some days they have to get up at 5am, after only two hours sleep, and once they performed at three different schools on the same day. It sounds like exhausting stuff but the lads enjoy their jobs and look fresh-faced when they take us to the dressing room for a break.

They've had a great time on the Steps tour, performing before thousands of screaming fans. But even though they've been singing and dancing on the same stage as their famous sister, they haven't seen much of her during the tour.

"We haven't see her as much as we'd like because she was so busy," admits Ant. "But any spare time Lisa had, she'd come to listen to us rehearse, give us advice and stop for a quick chat."

"And she knows what she's talking about," adds Andy. "She's in one of the biggest pop groups ever, so we'd be daft not to listen."

They have to listen, anyway, because Lisa isn't just their sister, she's their manager too, but they say she wasn't bossy when they were kids and she isn't bossy now.

You would think that having such a famous sister might make things a bit easier for the lads, but Ant says the opposite is true. "A lot of people might think that, but people won't buy our music just because our sister is in Steps. We have to prove that we're good too."

Funnily enough, the lads appeared in the Steps Tragedy video, although they didn't get to perform the famous routine. You can see them for about two seconds in the video, standing by the roadside. But making their own video, for debut single Take It Easy, was a lot more exotic – it was filmed on location in Africa!

Ant, Andy and Steve dream about having a hit single and eventually their own tour. But in the meantime, Funday wonders if they experienced any mishaps on the Steps Gold tour?

"Oh yes, something always goes wrong," chuckles Steve. "Like, one of us usually trips over one of the microphone stands. But nothing major so far, thank goodness."

"My worst moment wasn't on the Steps tour," adds Ant with a snigger. "It was at a club where the girls got a bit carried away. They ripped off my tracksuit trousers and left me standing there in my undies!"

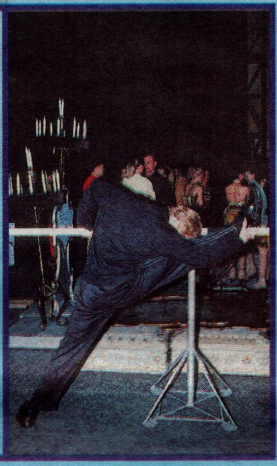
PICTURES TOM EVANS

Read Buzz!'s tribute to Lisa and rest of Steps on page 9!

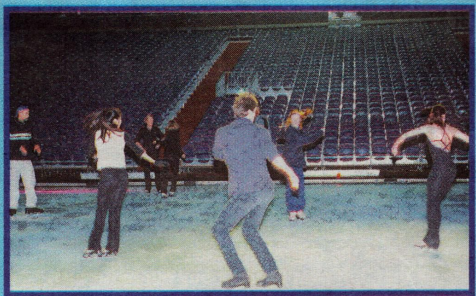
ICE BR

More than 300m people have seen the spectacular Holiday On I
Miranda Nugent meets the company's cosmopolitan cast in Am

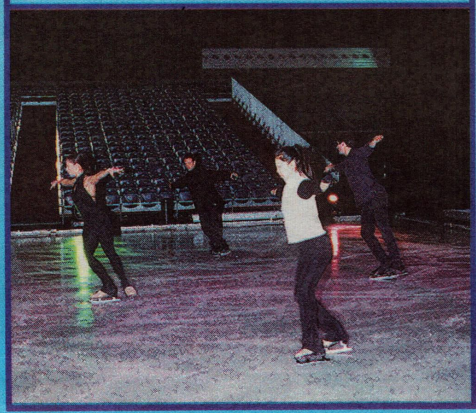
1 Like all Holiday On Ice shows, Colours Of Dance is touring the world, regularly moving from city to city. Last month, it opened at Amsterdam's Rai Centre – Holland's national exhibition centre – and, this week, it arrives in the UK, in Brighton.

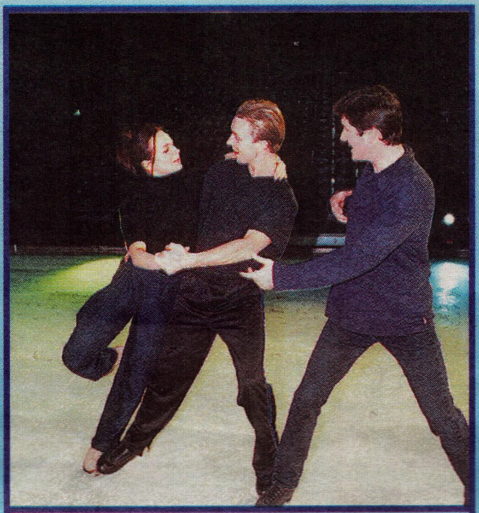


2 Four-time Australian champion and principal ice skater, Ashley Wilson, limbers up before the day's first rehearsal, with show choreographer Robin Cousins. Robin is a skating superstar – having won three figure skating gold medals for Britain at the world championships and an Olympic gold medal in 1980.



3 Robin runs through some moves with the show's cast. "We are working on the pieces because the rink will be much smaller in Brighton," Robin explains. "The day the skaters arrive in the UK is the day the show opens, so this is the only time we've got to rehearse."



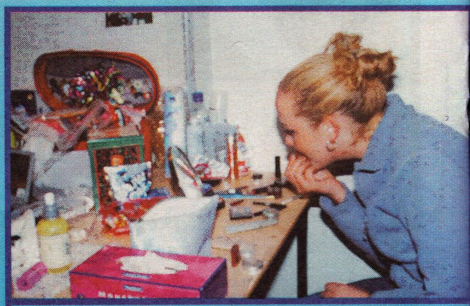


4 During the rehearsal, Robin gives two of the show's principal skaters, Ashley and Tatiana Zaitseva, from Russia, some top tips. "Robin is always telling me how I can do better," says Ashley. "Constructive criticism is helpful and even the best skaters in the world need it."

5 Due to the amount of skating required, American Michael Chack is suffering from a stress fracture in his shin. But that doesn't stop Michael from joining in the rehearsals and continuing his role as the show's principal male performer. "We've been doing so much skating, my body's getting used to it," he groans.

6 Rehearsals continue throughout the day, even though the skaters will all be performing in tonight's show. When they're not needed on the ice, they sit and relax at the backstage coffee shop, which was set up by English skater Lindsay Robinson. Of course, there's no rest for Lindsay who has to run the cast and crew coffee shop – even in the mid-show interval!

7 Before the show begins, everybody gathers backstage to bid a fond farewell to Russian skater, Elena Rafenko. Elena only originally intended to stay with Holiday On Ice for a few months but ended up staying for 10 years! "Life moves on," Elena says. "But I will miss you all!"



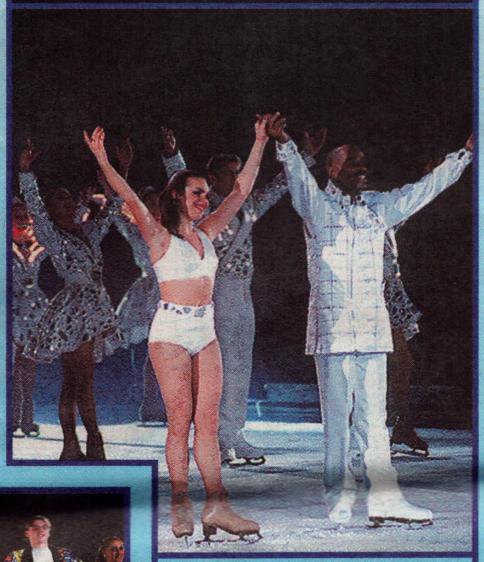
8 An hour before Colours Of Dance commences, 18-year-old Becky Wake – the company's youngest performer – joins the other female skaters in the changing room to put her make-up on. "I am getting used to doing it now," she says. "But it still takes me half-an-hour to get it all on!"

EAKER

ce – making it the most watched live entertainment in the world.
sterdam during rehearsals for their new show, Colours Of Dance

9 It's not just the girls who wear make-up for the show! Stuart Widdall, one of the company's five British skaters, puts his face on in the boys' changing room. "Luckily, we don't wear as much slap as the girls!" Stuart laughs. "It only takes me 10 minutes to put mine on."

11 A professional skater's boots are custom-made and are moulded to their feet. Skaters in the show have to buy their own boots [which cost about £400] and blades [approximately £300] which need replacing about every two years. To wear in a new pair of boots takes at least two weeks, but as Lindsay Robinson tells us: "Only a couple of minutes to put on!"

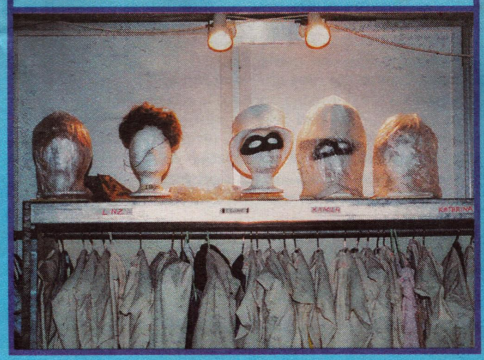


13 For the grand finale, the skilful skaters don costumes adorned with dazzling lights and mirrors. Although the outfits are cumbersome and heavy, the performers glide around in a seemingly effortless final display.

10 With make-up done, it's time to get into costumes. Each skater wears about six costumes during a single performance of Holiday On Ice. "It's very hard getting into a new costume quickly when it's dark backstage," points out Robin, who used to perform in Holiday On Ice. "People are always trying to put two feet into one trouser leg!"

12 It's show time and the cast take to the rink to entertain the 5,000 Dutch fans who have turned up to watch the breathtaking skating spectacular. During the two-hour show, the audience is thrilled by the athletic and balletic moves performed on the ice, including this long rotating line of skaters.

14 With the show over, Robin Cousins poses with the principal skaters for a publicity photoshoot. After that, everyone returns to their hotel for a well-earned rest, before rehearsals begin again tomorrow.

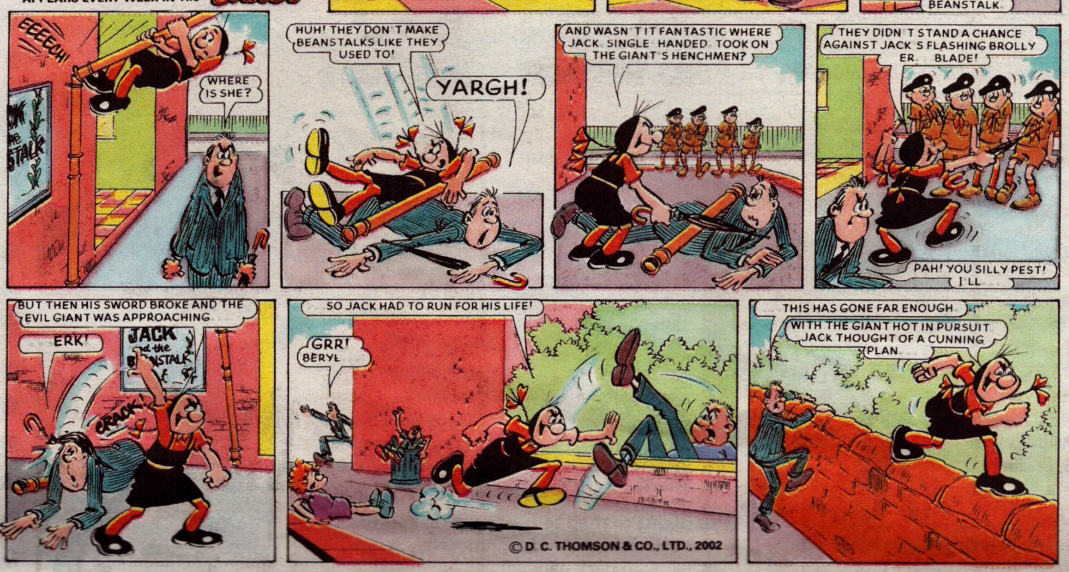


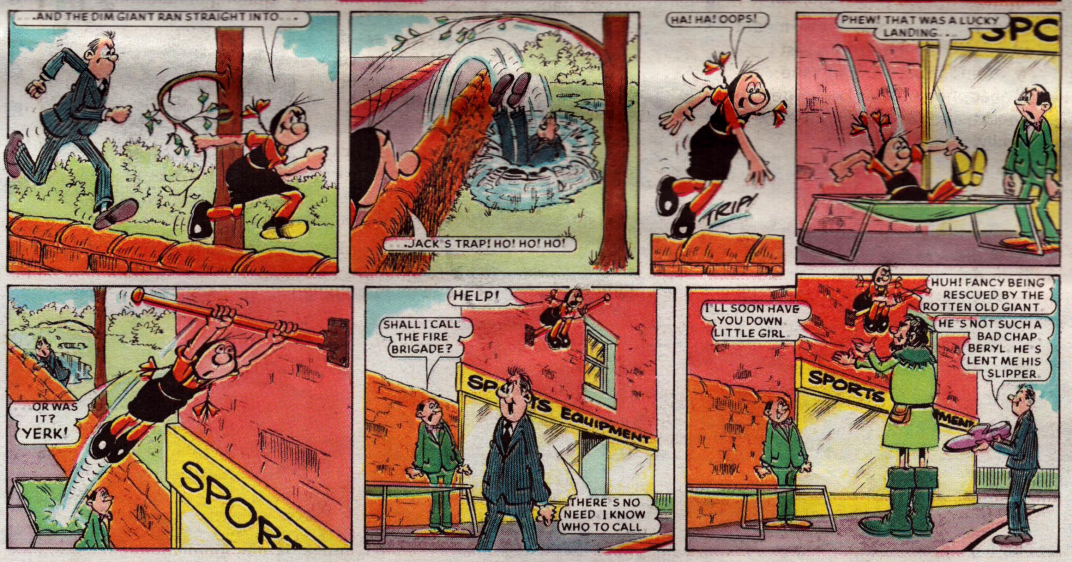
Colours Of Dance UK tour dates are as follows:
January 9 – February 3, Brighton Centre [0870 900 9100]
February 6 – 10, Wembley Arena [0870 739 0739]
February 13 – 17, Cardiff International Centre [02920 224488]
February 19 – 24, Exeter Westpoint [08705 321321]
February 27 – March 3, Sheffield Arena [0114 256 5656]
March 6 – 10, The National Ice Centre, Nottingham [0115 853 3000]

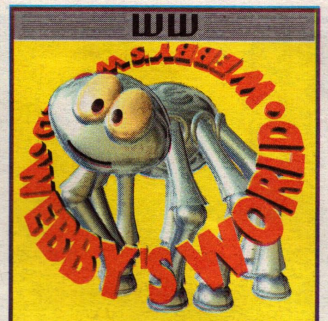
PICTURES: TOM EVANS

BERYL the PERIL

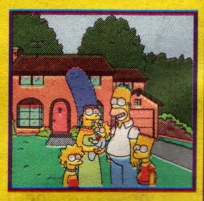
BERYL THE PERIL APPEARS EVERY WEEK IN The DANDY







www.thesimpsons.com
Bart, Lisa, Homer, Marge and Maggie have their own official website and this is it. It's worth surfing just for the intro – in which Homer gets tempted by a doughnut – but the cool guide to episodes, characters and Springfield make it a site that even Moe would get excited about – if he could be bothered!



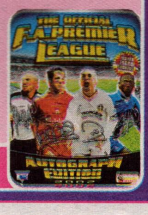
fifaworldcup.yahoo.com
Whip yourself into a World Cup frenzy – with just five months to go until the world's greatest sporting tournament begins! This is Fifa's [football's governing body] official site, so if you want up-to-the-minute news on all the teams, plus the lowdown on the players that England and the Republic of Ireland will face, bookmark it right away.

PICTURES: REUTERS/©FOX, AP

If you are a webhead and have discovered a great site, or have created one of your own, spin me a mail and tell me all about it on webby@sunday-times.co.uk

FRESH!

THE OFFICIAL FA PREMIER LEAGUE STICKER COLLECTION: AUTOGRAPH EDITION 2002 ★★★★★
Kick off 2002 with this new football sticker book, from Merlin. This comprehensive 428-sticker set features all Premiership players, managers, squad photos and club logos accompanied by player and club stats. Plus, there's a player's autograph on each sticker. So, who's going to trade our Becks for a Michael Owen? Filling the book is great fun, but beware – collecting and swapping stickers is an addictive pastime.



STICKER ALBUM

TEACHERS: THE NAKED TRUTH Knife & Packer ★★★★★
If you have overlooked this sneakily funny book – get to the back of the class, now! This cool and witty collection of scribbles and anecdotes would even give our Jarvis a chuckle. All aspects of school life are explored, including school dinners, field trips, PE and homework. The sketches are simple and edgy, while the gags are enough to make you wish you had Knife & Packer as classmates. It will get you smiling again during your back-to-school blues.

BOOK

CREATURES ★★★★★
These cute critters now need a bit of TLC on a hand-held! It's testament to the popularity of the Creatures franchise that the loveable Norns have managed to make it on to the GBA after entrancing PC users. And it's a great looking universe in which you have to name, nurture and develop your own little interactive Norn, or – if you are feeling devilish – a mischievous Grendall. It's all rather cute, but there's only so far cuteness can get you! One for dedicated fans rather than first timers.

GAME BOY ADVANCE

Looks like Beryl's got big problems!

FUNDAY

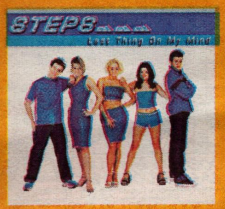
BUZZ!

A FOND FAREWELL

As Steps decide to call it a day, Buzz! looks back at some favourite Funday moments from the supergroup's glittering four-year career

Steps invade the Funday office and take over our jobs for the day in October 2000

We heard our first burst of Steps back in September 1997, when a review copy of 5, 6, 7, 8 landed in the Funday office. A strange song title perhaps, but an undeniably catchy tune. Plus, our first glimpse of Faye, Lisa, H, Lee and Claire frolicking on the beach in the video confirmed that Steps were an exciting new group.

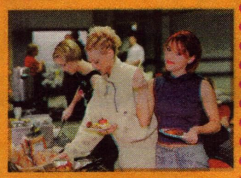


5, 6, 7, 8 was released in November and, although it failed to reach the top 10 [highest position – 14], it remained in the charts for three months, proving that the nation loved Steps. The follow up – Last Thing On My Mind – shot straight in to the chart at number 6, sealing Steps' position as legitimate chart stars ... and the rest is pop history.

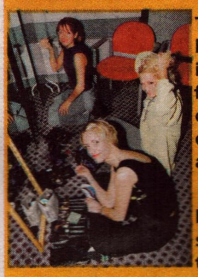
It was the band's fun dance routines that captured the imagination of fans. Each new single meant a fresh routine to copy – from the Last Thing On My Mind "hair wash", to the legendary "headphone hands" of Tragedy. Even grown-ups, and the odd member of the royal family, joined in the fun.

At the first Disney Channel Kids Awards, held at London's Old Vic in September 1998[above], Steps were the main attraction.

While other pop stars hid in their dressing rooms, Steps joined in the fun backstage and showed that they were always game for a laugh.

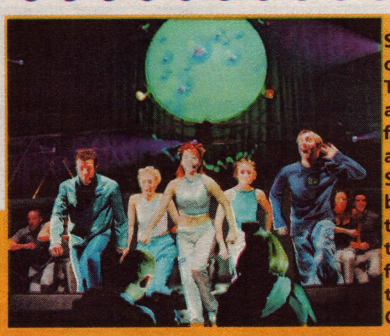


When Steps embarked on their first tour, in March 1999, they invited Funday along for an exclusive look behind the scenes.



The band soon became known as one of the friendliest acts in the music industry and, despite their huge success, kept their feet firmly on the ground. The girls even did their own hair and make-up. "We've all got our make-up on for the day – so before the show we just shove a load more glitter on top," revealed Lisa.

"I was very nervous before our first show," said H. "As well as all the new routines we've got to remember, we've also changed some of the old ones for the singles because now we've got dancers on stage as well."

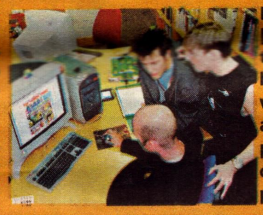


Steps proved themselves to be one of Britain's best live acts. The band enjoyed everything about life on the road – and fans were thrilled by their amazing concerts. The original Step One tour was followed by the Next Step arena tour, the dazzling Steptacular arena tour and open-air gigs, the festive Steps Into Christmas tour, and finally the Gold Greatest Hits tour.

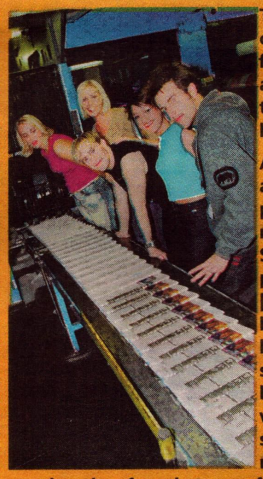
In October 2000, Steps took over the Funday office for a day, and helped to produce their very own special issue of the paper. At the editorial meeting with the Funday crew – editor Dave [right] explained what the famous five would be doing during their day.

Funday's picture editor Claire [left] showed Claire from Steps how to select the shots required to make up an issue.

Deputy editor Paul [right] chatted to Lee about his sporting achievements, and together they wrote our winning back page.

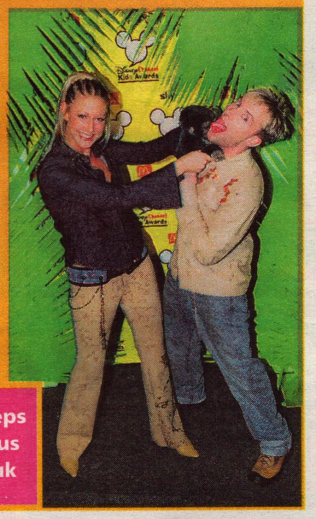


Designer Ed [left] showed the Steps boys how all the words, pictures and graphics are put together to create each page of Funday.



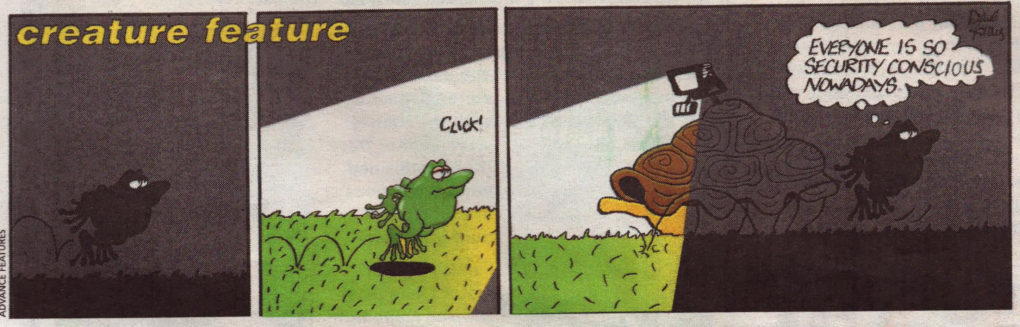
The band were chuffed with the finished result – and received their own copies of the special issue they helped to produce.

As Faye and H proved in our September photoshoot [right], the band never lost their sense of humour – which will stand them in good stead as they face their new futures. Farewell Steps, and good luck!



Tell us what you think of the Steps split – are you sad or glad? Let us know: buzz!@sunday-times.co.uk

PICTURES: JAMIE HUGHES



ADVANCE FEATURES

NEXT WEEK

PICTURE ©2001 THE WALT DISNEY COMPANY

Funday reports on the grand festivities that took place during the recent 100 years of magic celebrations at Florida's Disney World

It's the land of make believe! The all-singing allSTARS reveal to us their secret dreams

Buzz! catches up with Kaci and drops a beat with the Bomfunk MCs

f-mail

Send your letters, cartoons, jokes and drawings to: The Funday Times, PO Box 5073, Leighton Buzzard LU7 7GX Send your e-mail to: funday.times@sunday-times.co.uk

RAY FUN

Rayman 2: Forever is the handheld version of Rayman 2, for the Game Boy Color.
The helicopter-haired hero is in flying form for the latest gaming adventure. The alien comes across new objects, enemies and friends in 13 universes and 36 exclusive levels of gameplay, set in Rayman's colourful universe.
Ubi Soft has joined forces with Funday to give the writer of the star f-mail a Game Boy Color console and a copy of Rayman 2: Forever.
The other f-mailers will receive a goody bag containing a T-shirt, watch, figurine, pen and bouncy ball.

Dear f-mail,
Before Christmas, my school held an Amnesty meeting. Amnesty is a charity which works overseas helping to release people imprisoned for their beliefs. We wrote Christmas cards to prisoners in the Middle East. The prisoners are mostly held because their religion is different from other people's and many aren't even given a fair trial. These are innocent people who are punished unfairly for ridiculous reasons. The prisoners themselves may not actually get the cards but, if the prisons are bogged down by huge numbers of Christmas cards for one or two people, then they sometimes get released. I really admire their courage and I was moved to see that so many people wanted to make a difference!
Charlie Flint, Reading

Katrina Treadwell, 13, Westgate

The Funday four will keeping you laughing in 2002!

FUNDAY

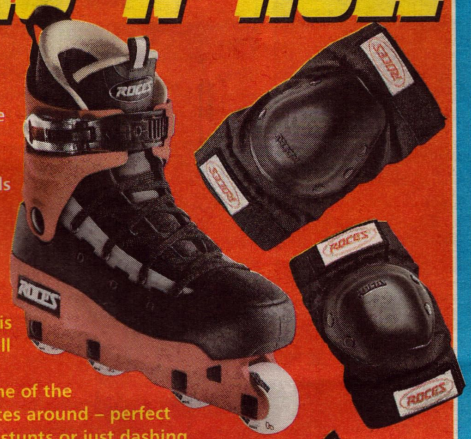
WIN IT!

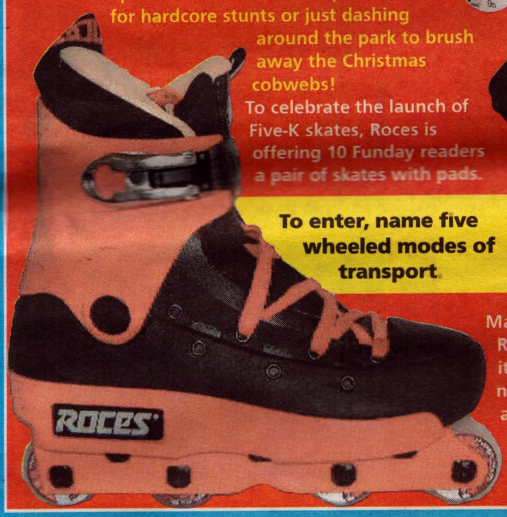
COMPETITION ADDRESS Send answers to all competitions to us at: The Funday Times, PO Box 5073, Leighton Buzzard LU95 1AY. Competition deadline: January 16

You can e-mail your competition answers to: funday.comps@sunday-times.co.uk
Sorry, but only one e-mail per entrant will be accepted.

ROCES 'N' ROLL

Inline skate maker, Roces, has created a brand new and aggressive style of skate – the Five-K. It has a central grindpost, 57mm 89A Hyper wheels and ABEC-5 bearings, which all add up to a whole lot of skate action for you.
With a combination of hard plastic outer chassis for support, flexible shell for fit and soft liner for comfort, the Five-K is one of the top inline skates around – perfect for hardcore stunts or just dashing around the park to brush away the Christmas cobwebs!
To celebrate the launch of Five-K skates, Roces is offering 10 Funday readers a pair of skates with pads.



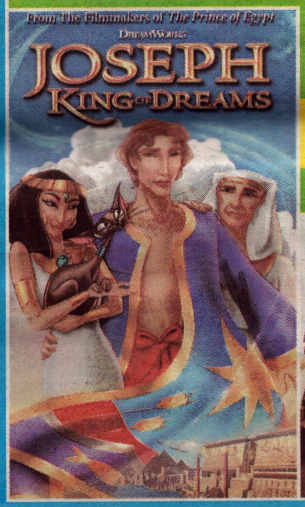


To enter, name five wheeled modes of transport.

Mark your entry ROCES and send it, with your name, age and address, to the competition address above.

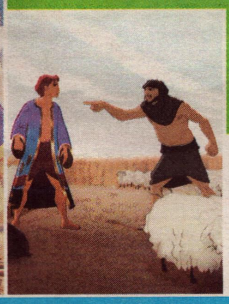
DREAM PRIZE

DreamWorks bring you Joseph: King of Dreams on video and DVD [£14.99] – an animated version of the classic biblical tale about Joseph and his multicoloured dreamcoat.
Featuring the voice of Hollywood hunk Ben Affleck [as the voice of Joseph], this musical adventure is one for all of the family. It retells the story about a boy who can look into the future via his dreams but has to flee to Egypt to escape his jealous brothers.
To celebrate the launch of the video, DreamWorks is offering one winner an LG KE14P2B silver TV/Video combi, a copy of the video and a selection of 100 classic family videos from Universal.
Plus, 20 runners-up each get a copy of the Joseph: King Of Dreams video.



To enter, just name the capital of Egypt.

Mark your entry JOSEPH and send it, with your name, age and address, to the competition address above.



DreamWorks HOME ENTERTAINMENT

Normal TNL competition rules apply to all Funday Times competitions

Dear f-mail,
This is the first time I have e-mailed you so I thought I'd send you a poem I made up about my brother, David, who is 8. I hope you like it.

I think my brother's from space,
But you can't tell by his face,
But then he said: "I got dressed in the dark and dried my hair on the radiator!"
I rest my case, he's from space.

Chloe Molyneux, 11, via e-mail

Dear f-mail,
This is my poem about Harry Potter.

Come and see Harry Potter,
Draco Malfoy is a rotter.
Hermione is not so bad,
Ron Weasley is a funny lad.
Fred and George are exactly the same,
And both played in the quidditch game,
Mrs Weasley is quite kind,
If she were my mum, I wouldn't mind!
I'll leave the rest for you to see,
When you come and watch Harry Potter with me.

Laura Kelly, 11, Dublin

Gemma Smith, 12, York

What's a cow's favourite film?
Moo-lin Rouge!
Sasha Adams, 10, Southampton

Diner: Waiter, this food isn't fit for a pig!
Waiter: Sorry, sir, I'll get you something that is!

Why did the burglar steal a washing-machine?
He wanted a clean getaway!

Alex Shearn, 10, Leeds

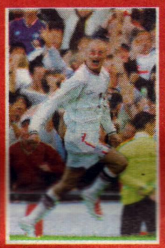
FUNDAY SPORT

WORLD IN MOTION

Funday Sport previews the top sporting events that will make the headlines in 2002

2002 Fifa World Cup finals

What is it: The world's biggest sporting event with 32 footballing nations competing for the title of world champions, including hosts Japan and South Korea, holders France, the Republic of Ireland and England. You will have to set the alarm though – the eight-hour time difference with Asia means most games will be played in the early morning!
When: May 31 – June 30
Where: South Korea and Japan – the first time the finals have been jointly hosted and the first time they've been held in Asia. The games will be played in 20 cities with the final in Yokohama, Japan.



Look out for: Favourites are defending champions France, who have the talents of Thierry Henry and Zinédine Zidane, with Argentina close behind. If England can get through the group stage [they're in the "group of death" with Argentina, Sweden and Nigeria as opponents!], David Beckham [left] and the team have a good chance. The Republic of Ireland, with captain Roy Keane [above], are a tough side to beat and could cause an upset.
Did you know: Qualifying countries China, Ecuador, Senegal and Slovenia have never played in the World Cup finals before.
Website: fifaworldcup.yahoo.com

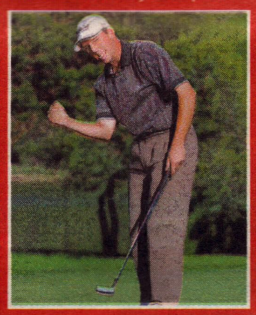
The XVII Commonwealth Games

What is it: The biggest sporting event to be held in Britain since Euro 96 with athletes from 72 Commonwealth nations, from as far as Australia, Malaysia, South Africa and Canada, competing. There will be 14 individual events and three team sports, including athletics, swimming, cycling, boxing, rugby sevens, badminton and wrestling.
When: July 25-August 4
Where: Manchester, England. The city has been transformed by the £32m Manchester Aquatics Centre, the National Squash Centre and the centrepiece 38,000-capacity City of Manchester Stadium, under construction in what is being called Sportcity.

Look out for: Aussie Ian "Thorpedo" Thorpe [above] in the swimming, Jonah Lomu in the rugby sevens and Paula Radcliffe [left] in the 5,000m. Paula will be up against the cream of the African runners again but, after disappointments in the Olympics and world championships, she will be looking to pick up a medal this time!
Did you know: After the games, the City of Manchester Stadium will become the home of Manchester City FC.
Website: www.commonwealthgames.com

The 34th Ryder Cup

What is it: Europe's top 12 golfers battle it out with the best 12 golfers from America. The two teams play each other over three days in three different golfing formats – foursomes, fourballs and singles – the first side to 14-and-a-half points wins.
When: September 27-29.
Held every two years, the 34th contest was originally scheduled for September last year, but the attacks on America caused the event to be postponed until 2002.
Where: The Belfry, Sutton Coldfield, England
Look out for: Tiger Woods will be prowling the fairways, which is enough to cause maximum excitement, but with fellow American David Duval, Spain's Sergio Garcia [below] and Northern Ireland's Darren Clarke playing, it's golfing gold.
Did you know: Of the 33 matches that have been played in the history of the Ryder Cup, America have won outright 24 times!
Website: www.rydercup.com



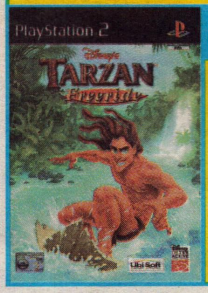
WATER GUY

Ubi Soft Entertainment and Disney's Interactive are releasing Disney's Tarzan Freeride, a swinging 3-D action-adventure game for PlayStation 2.

Gamers get the chance to be Tarzan and ride wild rivers, water-ski, bungee jump and swing from trees – so make sure you don't play straight after dinner!

We are giving one winner a PlayStation 2 console and a copy of the game.

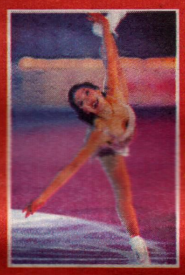
Plus, six runners-up will receive a copy of the game, a wallet and a belt.



To enter, tell us who wrote the original Tarzan story.

Mark your entry AAAAAHH and send it, with your name, age and address, to the competition address on page 11.

2002 Winter Olympics



What is it: A celebration of 15 winter sports, including alpine skiing, figure skating, ice-hockey, luge, bobsleigh, snowboarding and speed skating, with 2,000 athletes from 70 nations hoping to achieve Olympic glory.
When: February 8-24
Where: Salt Lake City, America
Look out for: American figure skater Michelle Kwan [left] should provide a touch of dazzling grace while another home-country contender is skier Bode Miller in the men's downhill. British medal hopes rest with Alex Comber in the women's skeleton bobsleigh and men's slalom skiier Alain Baxter [right].

Did you know: The Winter Olympics were held in the same year as the summer games until the sequence was broken in 1994. The winter games are now held two years before its summer equivalent.
Website: www.saltlake2002.com

©Times Newspapers Ltd 2002. Artwork and transparencies are submitted at the owner's risk and neither The Sunday Times nor its agents accept any liability for loss or damage. Published and printed and licensed for distribution in electronic form by Times Newspapers Ltd, PO Box 495, Virginia Street, London E98 1ST. UK, tel 0207 782 5000 and also printed at Kitling Road, Prescot, Merseyside L34 9HN. UK. Not to be sold separately from The Sunday Times and all other derivative forms by Times Newspapers Ltd. PO Box 495, Virginia Street, London E98 1ST. UK, tel 0207 782 5000 and also printed at Kitling Road, Prescot, Merseyside L34 9HN. UK. Not to be sold separately from The Sunday Times

PICTURES: REUTERS/RUSSELL BOYCE/PHILIPPE WOJAZER/JASON REED
EPA/CORBIS/PETER MUHLY/PA/AP/THOMAS GOZA, AP/JON HRUSA
MICHAEL STEELE/ALLSPORT

It's going to be a great year with Funday Sport!